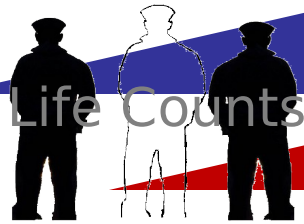
Suicide Prevention



Objectives

- Understand suicide stressors and risk factors
- Understand the Operational Stress Continuum
- Recognize signs that someone might be suicidal
- Understand myths associated with suicide
- Describe protective factors that reduce risk of suicide
- Apply the acronym ACT as it pertains to suicide awareness
- Describe responsibilities of individuals, shipmate, leader, and command in suicide awareness and prevention

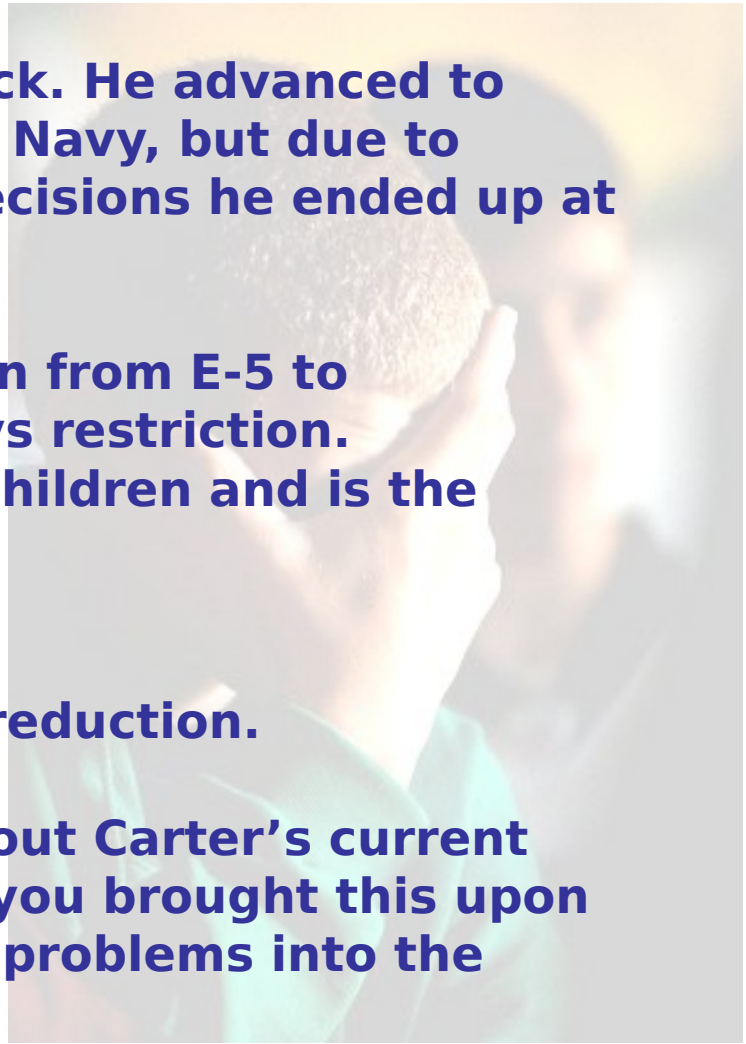
You may not be stressed and you may not be suicidal, but…

The prevalence of stress reactions and suicide in our Navy and families has increased.

The loss of one shipmate…

Is one too many!

Scenario



SN Carter was on a career fast track. He advanced to E-5 within two years of joining the Navy, but due to some uncharacteristic and poor decisions he ended up at a Captain's Mast.

It resulted in a pay-grade reduction from E-5 to E-3, 30 days extra duty and 30 days restriction. Carter is married, has two young children and is the main wage earner.

The family is living in a house it can no longer afford with the pay reduction.

Petty Officer Jones, who knows about Carter's current situation, tells him, "Deal with it, you brought this upon yourself, don't bring you personal problems into the workspace."

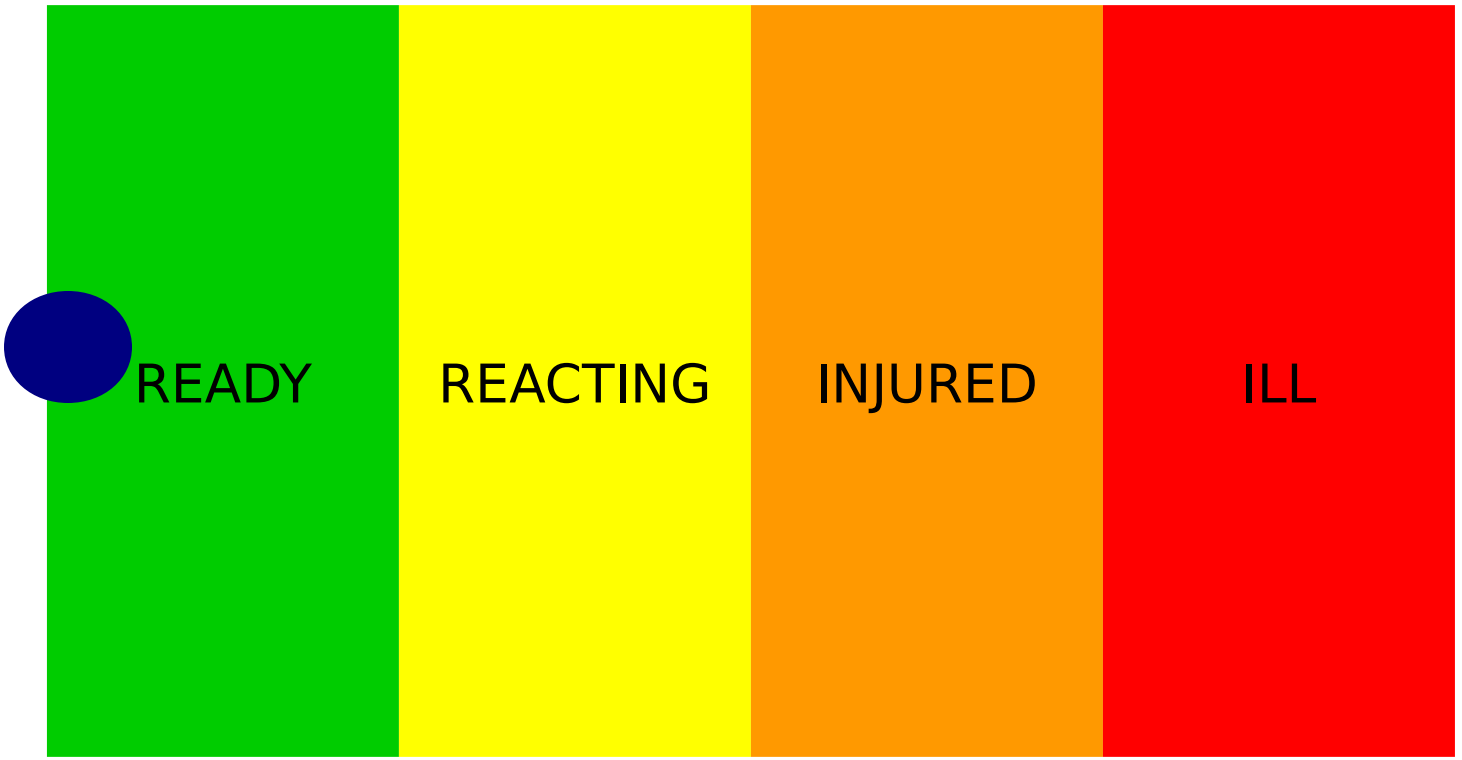
Questions

What are SN Carter's current stressors?

- **Pay-grade reduction**
- **Extra duty**
- **Cannot see family**
- **Cannot afford house**
- **Unsympathetic co-worker**

What are other risk factors for suicide?

Stress Continuum



Myths & Facts

1

2

3

4

Myth

People who are suicidal just want attention.

FACT

Suicide is about emotional pain and the inability to see an alternative way to stop it.

What can YOU do?

As an individual…

As a shipmate…

As a leader…

As a command…

Scenario

To help him cope with his stressful circumstance, SN Carter tries to stick to a regular exercise routine, reads and maintains regular communication with his family.

Yet nothing is helping him reduce the stress or the feelings of guilt and shame that he is experiencing.

Question

What is SN Carter doing to help deal with his stress?

- **Exercising regularly**
- **Reading**
- **Maintaining regular communication with his family**

Unclassifie
d

6 ways to build resilience

1 Have a positive outlook

2 Nurture your spirituality

3 Develop active coping

4 Be self-confident

5 Find meaning

6 Accept your limits

What can YOU do?

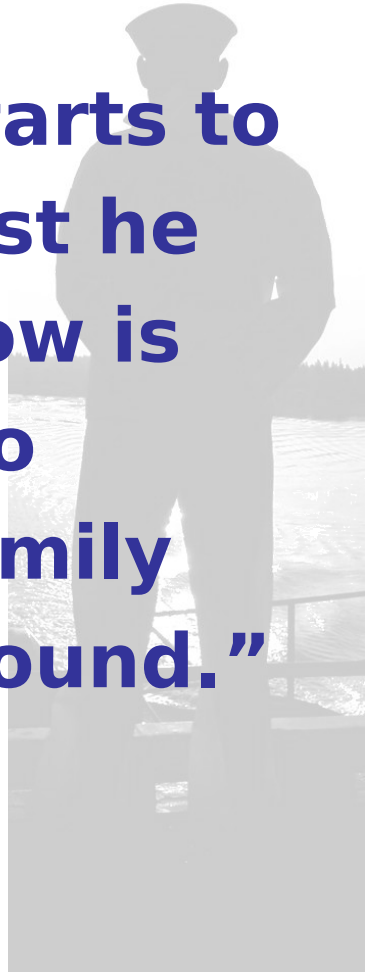
As a shipmate…

As a leader…

As a command…

Scenario

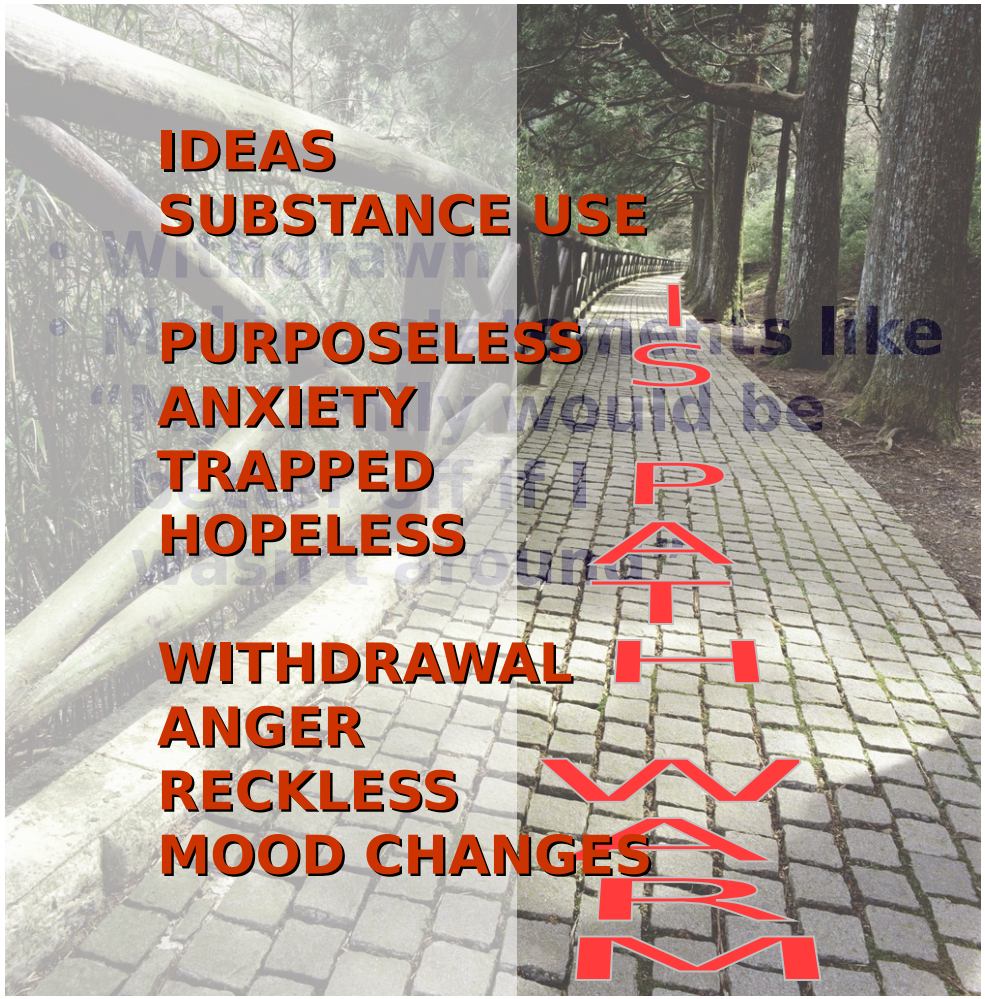
SN Carter's work performance starts to decline. Before the Captain's Mast he was social with shipmates but now is withdrawn and has been heard to make such statements as "My family would be better off if I wasn't around."



Questions

What are some signs that SN Carter may be suicidal?

What are some other signs that someone might be suicidal?



ACT

Ask

Care

Treat

Scenario

Petty Officer Smith has been SN Carter's shipmate for a while and is aware of some of the stressors that he is going through.

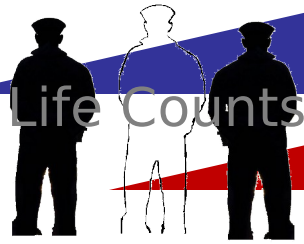
Smith pulls SN Carter to the side and says, "You seem to be acting different, and now I just heard you say that your family would be better off without you. Are you thinking about killing yourself?"

Questions

What did Petty Officer Smith do?

What if Petty Officer Smith did not intervene?

- SN Carter may have continued to isolate more
- Done something to hurt himself
- Put other shipmates at risk
- Commit suicide



ACT

ACT is the Navy's acronym for suicide prevention.

The A stands for ASK.

Ask

You can ask a shipmate, “Have you had too much to drink? I’ll drive you home.”

You can ask a shipmate who looks tired, “Are you having trouble sleeping?”

You can ask a shipmate you are concerned about, “Are you thinking about suicide?”

If YOU are the one in a stressful situation and are having difficulty dealing with it, YOU can ask for help. Don’t be afraid to ask.

Scenario

Petty Officer Smith listens *and pays attention* to what SN Carter has to say.

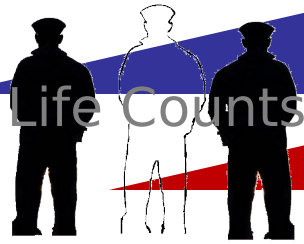
Questions

What did Petty Officer Smith do?

- He listened and paid attention to SN Carter's concerns, demonstrating he cares
- He provided an opportunity for SN Carter to disclose his feelings and he tried to find out if SN Carter has a plan to commit suicide or is just letting off some steam. He provided an immediate intervention to get SN Carter help.

The C stands for CARE.

We all need to know that we have value.



Care

How do YOU, as a shipmate, show YOUR co-workers that YOU value them?

How do You, as leaders, show YOUR Sailors that YOU value them?

Remember: YOUR attitude can save a life.

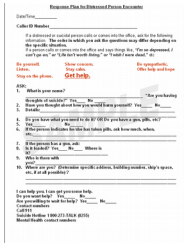
Scenario

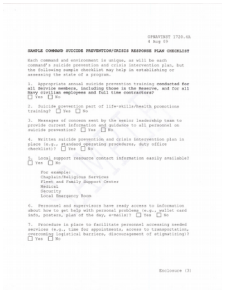
After listening to SN Carter, Petty Officer Smith says, “Let’s go talk to our LPO and see about getting you down to the Chaplain.”

The LPO spoke with SN Carter and initiated the command’s Crisis Intervention Plan.

Questions

What did Petty Officer Smith and the LPO do?





OPNAVINST 1720.4A
4 Aug 09

SAMPLE COMMAND SUICIDE PREVENTION/CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN CHECKLIST

Each command and environment is unique, as will be each command's suicide prevention and crisis intervention plan, but the following sample checklist may help in establishing or assessing the state of a program.

1. Appropriate annual suicide prevention training conducted for all Service members, including those in the Reserve, and for all Navy civilian employees and full time contractors?
☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Suicide prevention part of life-skills/health promotions training? ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Messages of concern sent by the senior leadership team to provide current information and guidance to all personnel on suicide prevention? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Written suicide prevention and crisis intervention plan in place (e.g., standard operating procedures, duty office checklist)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

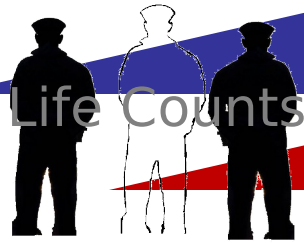
5. Local support resource contact information easily available?
☐ Yes ☐ No

For example:
Chaplain/Religious Services
Fleet and Family Support Center
Medical
Security
Local Emergency Room

6. Personnel and supervisors have ready access to information about how to get help with personal problems (e.g., wallet card info, posters, plan of the day, e-mails)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Procedure in place to facilitate personnel accessing needed services (e.g., time for appointments, access to transportation, overcoming logistical barriers, discouragement of stigmatizing)?
☐ Yes ☐ No

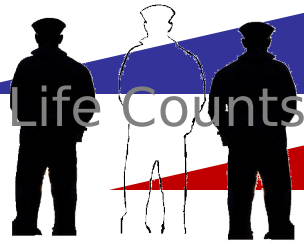
Enclosure (3)



ACT

The T stands for TREAT.

Take suicidal threats SERIOUSLY!
Escort the person to help.



Treat

DO NOT LEAVE THE PERSON ALONE until he or she is in the hands of someone who can help.

The general order, “I will not leave my post until I am PROPERLY relieved,” applies here.

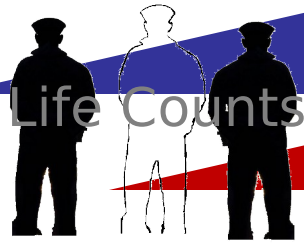
Resources

- Chain of command
- Chaplain
- Medical
- The nearest emergency room
- 800-273-TALK(8255)

Summary

- **Know your stress level.**
- **Ask about the stress level of your shipmates.**
- **Leaders, know your Sailors.**
- **Problems are temporary. Be resilient.**

- **Don’t be afraid to ACT: Ask about suicide, care for one another, take your shipmate to get help or get help for yourself if you need it.**
- **Know where help is located on your ship, in your command and in your community.**



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Questions